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Evaluation

Evaluation of the third global cooperation framework

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I. Introduction

1. The Executive Board approved the evaluation of the UNDP third global cooperation framework in June 2007[1] as part of the Evaluation Office programme of work for 2007-2008. The evaluation supports the substantive accountability of the UNDP Administrator to the Executive Board, and the findings are intended to provide inputs to the formulation of a new global programme (2008-2011), to be presented to the Board for its review and adoption.

2. The evaluation assessed the performance of the third global cooperation framework and offered key recommendations on how to strengthen the effectiveness of the global programme. The present report provides a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the independent evaluation.

3. The third global cooperation framework was managed by the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) between 2005 and 2007. The approved period was extended by the Executive Board through 2008 to allow for the drafting of a new global programme in line with the UNDP strategic plan (2008-2011)[2]. This evaluation – covering 2005-2007 – was conducted between October 2007 and April 2008.

II. Context

4. Until 1996, the global and interregional programme was used primarily to finance corporate-level initiatives and partnerships with major intergovernmental and academic institutions. Beginning in 1997, UNDP has implemented global cooperation frameworks, which have been managed by BDP and which have covered three to four-year periods. Between 1997-2007, three global cooperation frameworks have mirrored the corporate changes within UNDP; the first global cooperation framework (1997-2000), was conceived as a mechanism to: "...contribute to the overall development efforts of UNDP [by furthering] sustainable human development by translating global development aspirations and mandates into innovative and practical development interventions for application by UNDP through regional and country programmes and projects".[3]

5. The second global cooperation framework (originally 2001-2003 and extended to 2004) was designed to provide services in three priority support areas: "...(a) global advocacy and analysis to generate knowledge, build alliances, and promote enabling frameworks on key development issues; (b) policy advice, support and alignment across programmes, drawing on the global network of policy specialists; and (c) knowledge-networking and the sharing of best practices, drawing on the subregional resource facilities (SURFs) system and communities of practice to support country and regional programming efforts". [4]

6. The third global cooperation framework was intended to complement and strengthen ongoing efforts by UNDP to support programme countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Its primary objectives were: "...(a) To help UNDP country offices improve their effectiveness on the ground, in responding to requests from programme countries to plan, manage and deliver resources for development in pursuit of the MDGs; (b) To support developing countries, when requested, in developing policy frameworks that take advantage of global opportunities and resources under the priority goals of the second multi-year funding framework (MYFF) 2004-2007; and (c) To enable developing countries to benefit from interregional knowledge exchange and South-based experiences and learning, and ensure that

[1] Decision 2007/24, 'Annual report on evaluation', 22 June 2007, as contained in DP/2008/2, 'Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2007', 18 October 2007, p. 20

[2] The original duration of the third global cooperation framework was 2005-2007 and the Board granted a one-year extension in June 2007. UNDP, 'Decisions adopted by the Executive Board during 2007', DP/2008/2, decision 2007/44,18 October 2007, p. 42

[3] UNDP, 'First global country cooperation framework, 1997-2000' DP/GCF/1/Rev.1, 13 August 1997, p.5, paragraph 13

[4] UNDP, 'Second global cooperation framework, 2000-2003', DP/GCF/2, 27 November 2000, p.9. paragraph 27

development assistance, advice, programme design and capacity-building efforts draw on global best practices and expertise".[5]

7. The third global cooperation framework programme document identified a four-fold rationale for the global programme: (a) To ensure coherence among country, regional and global programmes within the organizing framework of MYFF 2004-2007 and build synergies in project formulation and implementation, sharing inter-regional good practices and consolidating knowledge into knowledge products; (b) To codify the pooled experiences and lessons learned from the UNDP network on the ground in 166 countries, and the work of all United Nations organizations, into knowledge products to the benefit of programme countries as well as UNDP, and facilitate the exchange of knowledge through knowledge networks; (c) To respond to the demands of programme countries for South-based development solutions through facilitating South-South cooperation; and (d) To enable strategic partnerships to influence the global agenda.

8. The third global cooperation framework was aligned with four strategic goals of the MYFF (2004-2007), namely: achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty; fostering democratic governance; managing energy and the environment for sustainable development; and responding to HIV/AIDS. It also supported work in two cross-cutting areas relating to the mainstreaming of gender equality and capacity development.

9. In order to achieve the goals outlined in the programme document, BDP was allocated $79.56[6] million in core resources and is accountable for the utilization of resources and the achievement of results and objectives. The same organizational structure through which BDP implements core resources is responsible for the implementation of non-core resources.

10. As mentioned earlier, BDP – specifically the Poverty Group, the Democratic Governance Group, Environment and Energy Group, the HIV/AIDS Group, the Capacity Development Group, and the Gender Team – was responsible for all aspects of the management of the third global cooperation framework. The first four 'practice groups' covered issues directly related to the four MYFF priority goals, while cross-cutting issues linked to two main principles of the third global cooperation framework (and directly relevant in the implementation of the four other issue-areas) were covered by the Capacity Development Group and the Gender Team[7]. An additional, central ambition was to strengthen knowledge management across all areas; each practice group addressed knowledge management and some resources were used to provide central coordination for knowledge management.8

11. The three primary implementation modalities used by each practice group were: policy advisory services; targeted projects; and knowledge management. In order to provide policy advice, 75 policy specialist posts were created. They performed a range of tasks including providing advice and backstopping support to country offices and programme countries, supporting practice-related knowledge management, supporting practice alignment and coordination, supporting fund-raising of non-core resources, managing targeted projects, supporting projects financed through non-core resources, and coordinating the work programmes of regional service centres and subregional resource facilities (SURFs). Two thirds of the policy specialists were based in regional service centres, while the other third were stationed at headquarters. Targeted projects were used, among other things, to pilot innovative approaches, develop practice-related knowledge products, and to leverage additional non-core resources. Knowledge management focused on interregional knowledge creation, transfer and codification. In all, 120 targeted projects – with a combined budget of $22.5 million – were implemented through the third global cooperation framework.

12. The International Poverty Centre in Brasilia, the Oslo Governance Centre, and the Drylands Development Centre in Nairobi constituted important implementation mechanisms

[5] UNDP, 'First global cooperation framework, 1997-2000' (DP/GCF/1/Rev.1, para. 14).
[6] An additional $5.14 million was allocated to the 'strategic reserve', which receives a financial allocation through the global programme. However, it does not constitute an integral component of the programmatic and operational structure of the third global cooperation framework.
[7] Hereinafter, the term 'practice groups' will be used to refer to all six entities, including the Capacity Development Group and the Gender Team.

aligned to the thematic areas of poverty, governance, and energy and environment. To differing degrees, each of these thematic centres emphasized applied research, policy or practice-related advice, and operational support to programme countries in their respective practice areas.

13. The work of the third global cooperation framework took place within the context of a rapidly changing development and technical cooperation environment, as well as evolving internal strategies and structures of UNDP aimed at providing more effective support to programme countries. Some key issues influencing the broader environment within which UNDP operated included ongoing United Nations reform, concerted efforts to strengthening United Nations-wide coordination and delivery, and a growing focus on improved harmonization and alignment among development partners. In addition to management reform initiatives, a stronger emphasis was placed on results-based management and regionalization in UNDP.

III. Approach and methodology

14. The evaluation covered all programmatic and operational aspects of the third global cooperation framework, with the exception of the 'strategic reserve', which receives a financial allocation through the global programme (and does not constitute an integral component of the programmatic and operational framework). The evaluation addressed efforts in all UNDP geographic regions between 2005 and 2007 and assessed the performance of the third global cooperation framework during this period against: (a) goals set by the MYFF (2004-2007); (b) the objectives and results framework contained in the third global cooperation framework programme document; and (c) the management response to the evaluation. The evaluation did not assess the ongoing regionalization process in any detail, though recent developments were taken into account.

15. The principal mandate of UNDP is to support programme countries in achieving development results. In evaluating the third global cooperation framework, the overarching concern was to ascertain its contribution to the achievement of results at the country level. However, in view of the 'global' nature of the framework, direct contributions were neither possible to determine nor expected, in many cases. Rather, the evaluation sought to determine the contribution of the third global cooperation framework in strengthening regional and country programme support to programme countries. The evaluation focused primarily on issues of relevance and effectiveness and also addressed issues of efficiency and sustainability.

16. The evaluation is based on quantitative and qualitative analyses. Evidence obtained was triangulated in order to ensure that findings were reviewed from different perspectives. The evidence for this evaluation was collected through case studies involving programme countries, regional service centres and headquarters, through electronic surveys, through the analysis of sample global projects, and through a desk study of relevant documents and secondary evaluative material.

17. In choosing the case study countries, a purposive sampling approach was adopted. Selection criteria included the level of global programme support received, the development context in terms of income level (with special attention to least developed countries), and representation across regions (with special emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa). Almost all regional service centres or SURFs and the three thematic centres were visited. Selected case study locations are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Case study countries and regional service centres / subregional resource facilities

UNDP region / thematic centres	Case study countries	Regional service centres and SURFs
Africa	Liberia Mali Rwanda Tanzania Zambia	RSC Dakar RSC Johannesburg
Arab states	Tunisia Yemen	SURF Beirut
Asia and the Pacific	Cambodia Indonesia Nepal	RSC Bangkok RSC Colombo
Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States	Armenia Uzbekistan	RSC Bratislava
Latin America and the Caribbean	Bolivia El Salvador	SURF Panama City
Thematic centres	Drylands Development Centre, Nairobi International Poverty Centre, Brasilia Oslo Governance Centre	

18. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with individual stakeholders identified among government officials, civil society organizations, UNDP units, other United Nations entities and bilateral donors. Over 400 individuals were interviewed around the world. In addition, two surveys were carried out among 36 of the policy advisors linked to the third global cooperation framework (51 per cent response rate), and among resident coordinators / resident representatives or country directors (23 per cent response rate). Due to the low response rate, the latter survey was only used for selective analyses and to indicate certain trends among the respondents. A review of the stratified random sample of 33 projects (out of the total of 121 projects) was undertaken to gather additional evidence. A desk study of secondary evaluative evidence and relevant documentation was conducted to supplement the primary evidence.

19. The limitations of the evaluation included: (a) challenges in developing a methodology to address the broad and complex nature of the third global cooperation framework; (b) inability to cover the full diversity of country experiences; (c) lack of data and evaluative evidence due to inadequate monitoring and self-assessments; and (d) extremely tight timelines.

20. The evaluation did not carry out a detailed assessment of the work conducted under each of the six practice and cross-practice areas supported by the third global cooperation framework. However, practice-based analyses were conducted to identify common issues of relevance to a broader understanding of the framework.

IV. Key findings

21. The evaluation recognizes that, within the broad programmatic framework of the MYFF (2004-2007), the third global cooperation framework was unique in providing the basis for global development policy work that was grounded in the country and regional experience of UNDP. The outputs from this work were intended to enrich the contributions of the organization to development results at the country level. The effectiveness of the framework was therefore predicated on strong internal and external demand and partnerships. The key findings that are presented below reflect the evaluation's coverage of issues related to the formulation and

operationalization of the third global cooperation framework, the results achieved as well as management and oversight.

Formulation of the third global cooperation framework

22. Findings relating to the formulation of the third global cooperation framework include:

(a) The issues addressed by the third global cooperation framework were relevant to the concerns of programme countries in line with the commitments of UNDP in the MYFF (2004-2007);

(b) The third global cooperation framework constituted a relatively loose framework covering all relevant areas of the MYFF. Its 'results and resources framework' did not present an integrated, results-oriented programme of work, based on a plausible 'theory of change';

(c) Compared with previous global programmes, the third global cooperation framework significantly reduced its emphasis on the global development policy agenda;

(d) The ability of the third global cooperation framework to fulfill its planned role was constrained by unclear articulation of its scope and programmatic strategy in addressing global issues. It was further constrained by insufficient substantive collaboration of the programme with other UNDP units, particularly those units that address global issues, such as the Human Development Report Office, the Office of Development Studies, the Bureau of Conflict Prevention and Recovery, and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation;

(e) The third global cooperation framework did not explicitly identify and focus on areas that were most likely to contribute to the advancement of human development. Moreover, the attempt to cover all 24 service lines of the MYFF perpetuated a 'silo approach' and inhibited a systematic quest for a holistic development response and the ability to focus resources on key issues and needs; and

(f) In addition, the third global cooperation framework programme document lacked contextual analysis of the diverse development contexts in different regions and country types, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States. This undifferentiated approach reduced the programme's relevance.

Operationalization and implementation

23. Findings relating to operationalization and implementation include:

(a) The third global cooperation framework had multiple roles ranging from development of policy approaches through the provision of operational guidance and tools, to the delivery of direct programme services at the country level, and support to knowledge networking. In practice, the possible synergistic linkages among these roles were not fully exploited resulting in resources being scattered;

(b) The third global cooperation framework did not adopt an explicit partnership strategy that sought to harmonize or integrate development efforts of key partners within the United Nations system and beyond. It entered into a multitude of partnerships at many different levels, many of which supported relevant activities, but did not always lead to sustained results;

(c) There was limited UNDP-wide ownership of the third global cooperation framework. Clarity and full awareness of the range of functions and services provided under the framework was lacking among UNDP units, including the regional bureaux, the regional service centres, SURFs and country offices. Consequently, reach and contribution of the framework were significantly limited;

(d) The third global cooperation framework was largely driven by supply rather than by client demand. Little prioritization took place to identify the issues and areas in which the framework could add most value. The three main modalities of delivering support –

policy advice, targeted projects and knowledge management – were not consistently used in a coordinated manner;

(e) In general, the third global cooperation framework encouraged the development of generic knowledge products, tools and approaches that did not sufficiently take into account the developmental complexities and local practical realities arising from subregional specificities and differences between country groupings;

(f) In operationalizing the third global cooperation framework, cross-practice work and initiatives that involved more than one service line were explicitly encouraged. However, cross-practice approaches to complex and multidimensional developmental challenges continued to be exceptions rather than the rule; and

(g) Resources were spread thinly across and within practice areas, policy advisors and targeted projects. The hiring of 75 policy advisers was intended to support all programme countries in all 24 service lines of the MYFF as well as provide policy advice to programme countries, contribute to knowledge management, practice alignment and coordination. They were also expected to mobilize resources and provide programme support to country offices. In each practice group, funding for targeted projects was also distributed across all service lines.

Programme results

24. Findings relating to programme results include:

(a) The third global cooperation framework registered some notable successes. It invested in a number of areas in which it added 'global' value to the work of UNDP, and applied integrated modalities across UNDP – including two-way knowledge flows from the country over the regional to the global levels and back, some knowledge codification, and policy advisory and programme support services – thus contributing to the efforts of UNDP to support the achievement of development results. In all practice areas there were examples of valued contributions to country office performance;

(b) In the area of 'achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty', the third global cooperation framework contributed to strengthening the MDG-based development agenda and achieved successes, inter alia, in the areas of trade and 'generating fiscal space'. Efforts to address a very wide range of MDG and poverty-related issues weakened its contribution to issues of global import, to which it may have been able to add more value as a 'global' programme;

(c) In the area of 'fostering democratic governance, the third global cooperation framework made important contributions in the areas, inter alia, of electoral support, public administration reform, representative institutions, and local governance. The prevailing tendency was to address each service line in isolation, but some efforts were made to introduce a more cross-practice and cross-cutting approach;

(d) In the area of 'managing energy and environment for sustainable development', the support of the third global cooperation framework was valued by country offices in areas such as governance, in the context of the 'poverty and environment initiative' and land governance. But the framework's broad agenda in this area led to resources being spread thinly, weakening its ability to achieve more prominent results;

(e) The relevance of the work of the International Poverty Centre, the Oslo Governance Centre and the Drylands Development Centre to the objectives of the third global cooperation framework was uneven, but improved between 2005 and 2007. The relative autonomy of the centres provided a context for some innovative applied research and policy work, but this was not always fully integrated into the third global cooperation framework;

(f) In the area of 'responding to HIV and AIDS', the third global cooperation framework registered considerable achievements in providing direct support, in cooperation with other UNDP units and partners, to programme countries. However, the added value of the framework – as a 'global' programme – was assessed to be greater in

mainstreaming HIV/AIDS within other practice areas and in developing broader policy guidance and tools;

(g) The success of gender-related work lay in strengthening the internal capacity of UNDP and improved understanding of gender equality as a cross-cutting concern and key determinant of human development results at the country level. However, gender mainstreaming remained incomplete in all of the substantive practice areas and lacked knowledge management support;

(h) The effectiveness of the third global cooperation framework support to capacity development was seen in the up-take of the many guidance and knowledge products and in the productive collaboration with United Nations Development Group and external institutions such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee. Some weaknesses expressed by country offices included a tendency to develop knowledge products and tools that were too generic; a more context-specific approach would have been beneficial;

(i) Work in mainstreaming both gender and capacity development under the third global cooperation framework registered successes, but did not focus sufficiently on mainstreaming within the four practice areas. The global programme was assessed to be an appropriate vehicle to mainstream important issues such as gender, capacity development, HIV/AIDS and potentially other cross-cutting development issues;

(j) The exchange and management of knowledge, including through knowledge networks and communities of practice, was prioritized and was appreciated within UNDP. In the absence of a corporate strategy for knowledge management, however, there was a lack of clarity regarding the role of the third global cooperation framework in establishing UNDP as an effective knowledge organization;

(k) The third global cooperation framework did not engage in South-South cooperation in a systematic way. There was insufficient attention to identifying gaps in capacities and emerging trends in South-South cooperation, codifying knowledge and experiences within a South-South cooperation framework. A strong strategic partnership with the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation was not established; and

(l) Considerable non-core resources were mobilized for use in implementing the third global cooperation framework. UNDP estimated that nearly $236 million were raised and resource mobilization activities were generally considered to be cost-effective.

Management and oversight

25. Findings relating to management and oversight include:

(a) In operationalizing the third global cooperation framework, principles of results-based planning, monitoring and reporting were not consistently applied. UNDP undertook to strengthen management of the programme, as outlined in its management response to the evaluation of second global cooperation framework, and although initiatives to strengthen financial monitoring and human resources management were undertaken, results-based management remained inadequate;

(b) With minor exceptions, no audits and evaluations were conducted, thereby limiting any systematic understanding of successes and weaknesses of the third global cooperation framework and what areas might have required adjustment. A few sub-practice evaluations were conducted in the democratic governance practice area and an audit of the global programme is planned for 2008;

(c) The flexibility of the third global cooperation framework managers to deploy resources in a strategic or programmatic manner was constrained by the practice of tying almost 80 per cent of framework resources to salaried posts and other staff;

(d) Each practice group was allowed to pursue its own management approach and central programme coordination was weak. This resulted in poor programme coherence and inadequate quality assurance;

(e) Efforts were more effective when priority-setting and management of programmes were undertaken by units closest to the country level. The recent implementation of the regionalization strategy has highlighted some of the challenges in sharing financial resources and matrix management of human resources between regional service centres and BDP; and

(f) UNDP undertook to address oversight and accountability in the management response to the evaluation of the second global cooperation framework. In practice, few of the related commitments were implemented under the successive framework. Senior management committees did not systematically review progress and the proposed external advisory committee was not activated.

V. Conclusions

26. The global programme has an important role to play in the context of the broader programming landscape of UNDP. The third global cooperation framework registered some successes, but was unable to translate them into a systematic programme of a global nature for a range of systemic, design and management-related reasons. There was a lack of clarity regarding its 'global' role, its 'cooperation' agenda and modalities, and the scope and purpose of its programmatic 'framework'.

Conclusion 1

27. The third global cooperation framework fell short in its strategic mission to underpin and integrate the practice architecture of UNDP. In particular:

(a) The third global cooperation framework was placed at the centre of the practice architecture to provide coordination, guidance and knowledge services to country programmes on practice-related issues. Considerable intellectual capital was made available through the network of policy specialists and other experts, and some useful work was conducted. However, the full scope of these mandated functions could not be addressed effectively in all programme countries due to limited core resources and inadequate institutional support mechanisms; and

(b) The central role of the global programme in the practice architecture of UNDP and in strengthening support to countries in each of these practice areas was not fully recognized by most UNDP units. In most cases, the framework was not seen as a programme through which new ideas and innovative approaches emanating from country experiences were infused into the entire UNDP system.

Conclusion 2

28. The effectiveness of the third global cooperation framework in meeting demand was constrained by weak strategic choices regarding focus areas, implementation modalities, allocation of resources and partnerships. In particular:

(a) The contribution of the third global cooperation framework to the achievement of development results could have been significantly strengthened by focusing on areas of high demand, in which it also had a clear comparative advantage. The service lines of the MYFF (2005-2007) were taken as the programmatic determinant. This resulted in insufficient attention being paid to areas where the programme could have made a major contribution, while continuing to fund areas where the programme could not add as much value;

(b) Emphasis on developing generic approaches rather than contextualizing products and services in order to address specificities of sub-regions or country types limited the appropriateness of the work. Partnerships, with a few notable exceptions, were more opportunistic than strategic, and did not fully exploit the comparative advantages of partners or build new development opportunities for programme countries; and

(c) By virtue of its global mandate, and in line with the guiding principles of the MYFF, the third global cooperation framework was in a strong position to develop cross-practice approaches to address complex development challenges for application by country and regional programmes. It was also well placed to provide guidance on mainstreaming approaches in the areas of gender, capacity development and other issues, such as HIV/AIDS. The third global cooperation framework could have enhanced its relevance by focusing more systematically on cross-practice and mainstreaming approaches.

Conclusion 3

29. The third global cooperation framework contributed to UNDP becoming a more globally-networked knowledge organization. In particular:

(a) The support of the third global cooperation framework to knowledge networking was an effective means to support practice and cross-practice work. In general, the practice networks, websites and other instruments to share knowledge were appreciated by internal stakeholders. However, the effectiveness of the sharing and exchange of knowledge was constrained by an ad-hoc approach to codification, most practice networks being closed to external partners, and the uneven quality of the knowledge products. Such ad hoc approaches also prevented the third global cooperation framework from engaging in South-South cooperation in a systematic way. Early successes achieved through the networks were not optimized through systematic codification and technical improvements; and

(b) While the third global cooperation framework made considerable efforts to enhance knowledge management and some successes were achieved in strengthening UNDP as a globally-networked knowledge organization, the absence of a corporate strategy meant it could not achieve its full potential in knowledge management.

Conclusion 4

30. Weak management and lack of corporate oversight limited the effectiveness of the third global cooperation framework. In particular:

(a) The third global cooperation framework would have benefited significantly from a consistent application of results-based management principles and techniques. By neglecting standard UNDP planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation practices, decision-makers were deprived of clear programmatic targets and the opportunity to regularly assess the contribution of the programme to the achievement of development results. Management could not use evaluative evidence to strengthen the quality of the programme's products, services and approaches or make strategic decisions regarding the future direction of the programme;

(b) There was little evidence of a clear understanding between BDP and the regional bureaux on their respective roles and responsibilities in their collaborative efforts, especially in the regional service centres and SURFs. The matrix management system through which BDP-funded policy specialists were managed was not generally effective in supporting the alignment of the practice architecture. The tensions that arose from mixed funding mechanisms and multiple lines of accountability weakened the potential effectiveness of the framework. These tensions will have to be addressed in the regionalization strategy; and

(c) In the absence of an internal UNDP oversight mechanism, UNDP was unable to harness the full potential of the framework for the benefit of the organization. Moreover, without an external consultative process with development partners, the responsiveness and relevance of the third global cooperation framework to emerging priorities of programme countries was uneven.

Conclusion 5

31. Although the third global cooperation framework has not fulfilled its global role, there is a need for a global programme in UNDP. In particular:

(a) The third global cooperation framework has supported some successful initiatives to strengthen support to programme countries drawing from the global experience of UNDP, and at the country level there is significant demand for the type of services provided by the programme. However, these successes were not translated into a systematic effort of a global nature and the framework was unable to go beyond compiling country experiences, to use this accumulated knowledge to contribute to global development debates and approaches on any significant scale;

(b) There are development issues that cannot be addressed solely at the country or regional levels, for which UNDP needs a global programme. Given its universal presence, UNDP has the potential to contribute to global development debates and approaches drawing from its development experience at the country, regional and global levels. In turn, UNDP can benefit all programme countries by drawing from this global experience and developing innovative development policy approaches as well as facilitating South-South cooperation. In this regard, the third global cooperation framework has not realized its full potential.

VI. Recommendations

32. This evaluation recommends that UNDP should design a new global programme that embodies a clear departure from the previous global cooperation frameworks. The new global programme should be based on demand from programme countries, be fully integrated within UNDP, and add value as a 'global' programme. It should address 'global' issues and leverage all UNDP entities with a view to generating, codifying and applying 'global' knowledge. The following detailed recommendations aim to support UNDP in developing such a new global programme. They are intended to be mutually reinforcing and should be treated as a whole.

Recommendation 1

33. The new global programme should clearly set out its global role, development goals, a strategic focus and a corresponding results and accountability framework based on the following considerations:

(a) A clear rationale and the specification of clear criteria to distinguish global programme initiatives from those that can be addressed at the regional and country level;

(b) A programme approach, which should replace the current framework approach. It should have unambiguous goals, a clear substantive focus and a detailed results framework that covers all dimensions of the programme;

(c) A clear definition of its global contribution and its contribution to programme countries, through the regional and country programme architecture of UNDP;

(d) Alignment with the UNDP strategic plan. It should continue to work within and across the three main focus areas identified therein, namely poverty reduction, democratic governance and environment. Within each of these focus areas, work should be concentrated on a limited number of key result areas selected on the basis of past performance and comparative advantage. The approach in the third global cooperation framework of carrying out activities in all service lines should be discontinued;

(e) A concentration on mainstreaming approaches in the cross-cutting areas of gender equality, capacity development and HIV/AIDS across the focus areas for application by regional and country programmes; and

(f) The identification of means to reduce the dependency on the global programme to fund posts required by BDP to carry out its core functions such as global development policy work and practice coordination and development. One option may be to amend existing programming arrangements to explicitly allow for the funding of BDP posts.

Recommendation 2

34. UNDP should develop improved corporate strategies and delivery mechanisms so that the new global programme can better support the achievement of results at the country level based on the following considerations:

(a) The need for a corporate knowledge management policy and strategy that clearly identifies the type of knowledge to be codified, how the processes are managed, and how best to respond to the needs of the organization and programme countries. The role of the new global programme in implementing the new strategy should be clearly defined;

(b) The new global programme should provide country offices and their national partners with codification of cutting-edge analyses of global issues that are grounded in UNDP experience;

(c) Demand by country offices for policy advisory, knowledge and programme support should be met by units best placed to respond based on their location and capacity. Primary responsibility and accountability should rest with the regional service centres for managing and delivering programme and policy support to country offices and for conveying country level experience back to the central bureaux responsible for analysis and codification; and

(d) Responsibility for implementing the new global programme should be shared by BDP and the regional bureaux through the regional service centers. Those components involving the provision of services and support to the country level should be managed by the regional bureaux and the regional service centers. Resources for the new global programme should be allocated and managed based on the requirements of the programme's functions at the global and regional levels and the comparative advantage of respective UNDP units.

Recommendation 3

35. The new global programme should have an explicit strategy to partner systematically with other United Nations agencies and development institutions in order to contribute to development policy debates and approaches that are critical to programme countries for the achievement of their development goals by:

(a) Identifying partners who will add most value in priority areas, specifying joint outcomes to be achieved, and identifying sustained cooperation modalities;

(b) Collaborating with other United Nations development agencies and development partners to effectively address global development challenges and contribute to global development debates and approaches;

(c) Strengthening South-South cooperation modalities, in close partnership with programme countries, centres of excellence worldwide and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, as a means of ensuring the relevance and appropriateness of the knowledge generated, codified and further promoted; and

(d) Enabling the thematic centres to enter into long-term collaboration with Southern think tanks and centres of excellence.

Recommendation 4

36. UNDP should establish a management system for the new global programme that ensures results orientation and accountability through strengthened corporate management and compliance with standard UNDP programming requirements by:

(a) Institutionalizing standard results-based planning, performance monitoring and reporting practices that are underpinned by effective support mechanisms, such as a comprehensive substantive database;

(b) Establishing standards of management performance across all work areas and ensuring, through central coordination, the most strategic deployment of human and financial resources and consistency in implementation;

Instituting regular audits and outcome evaluations; and

(d) Conducting a mid-term review of the new global programme to ensure that benchmarks outlined in the management response to the third global cooperation framework evaluation, and set in the new global programme approved by the Executive Board, are met.

Recommendation 5

37. UNDP should institutionalize mechanisms to ensure corporate oversight and ownership of the global programme by:

(a) Strengthening mechanisms to enable the active participation and full support from corporate UNDP in order to promote buy-in by all units that it serves and from which it draws vital development information;

(b) Ensuring synergy among the different UNDP units dealing with policy development at the global level, including the Human Development Report Office, the Office of Development Studies, and the Bureau of Conflict Prevention and Recovery, in order to contribute more effectively to global policy debates and advances in development approaches;

(c) Establishing an advisory board for the global programme involving external partners and internal stakeholders, in order to identify comparative advantage and ensure the relevance of a new global programme;

(d) Ensuring corporate oversight over the global programme, through a senior management group such as the operations group or management group; and

(e) Explicitly reporting, on an annual basis, on the performance of the new global programme, as part of the regular system of reporting by UNDP to the Executive Board.